

County to Relocate Homeless Shelter as a Result of Protest by Councilwoman Bonner and Rocky Point Residents

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Farmingville, NY - Councilwoman Jane Bonner has announced that a homeless shelter run by Suffolk County Department of Social Services (DSS) will be moved from Nautilus Drive in Rocky Point to a more suitable location. The action comes only a week after the Councilwoman met with local residents and community leaders, and later sent a letter of protest to County Executive Steve Bellone and Legislator Sarah Anker, who were both unaware of the shelter's placement in the residential neighborhood. In her letter, Councilwoman Bonner strongly urged for the immediate review of the case and arrangements with the DSS be made to have the shelter residents, who are all males, moved to alternative housing. The Councilwoman also announced last week that Town Building Department investigators gained access to the premises and observed that the living room was illegally converted into a bedroom. As a result, several appearance tickets were issued for violations including failure to submit a rental registration, building without a permit and no Certificate of Occupancy.

In making the announcement about the County's relocation plan, Councilwoman Jane Bonner said, "Our County officials need to be more responsive to the needs of the community when homeless shelters like this are being considered, especially in residential neighborhoods. I am happy to know that the quick action by my staff and I, along with the Town's Building Department investigators, resulted in the relocation of this shelter. I will look very closely at the confidentiality laws that allowed this to be placed in Rocky Point under the radar and make every effort to have them amended so communities are less likely to be blindsided in the future."

The Councilwoman also expressed her disappointment in the County's lack of communication with her office and local residents, saying "This should never have happened in the first place, but there seems to be a disconnect with the County when it comes to them making decisions like this and doing what is best for the community."

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